

Social Media Literacy and Awareness of the Youth in Secondary school in Southern Thailand

Korawan Seubsom, and Nopparat Meeplat

Nakhon Si Thammarat Rajabhat University, Thailand, {Korawan_seu; Nopparat_Me@nstru.ac.th}

ABSTRACT

The paper presents the outcome of a research that investigates the social media literacy, and to assess the level of awareness of media literacy from young people in secondary schools. This study used mixed-method of both quantitative and quality research to collect data from four schools in Nakhon Si Thammarat Province. This study used activities – based with involves four levels of media literacy framework; access, analyze, evaluate and create. The data were collected after the respondents met all levels of media literacy framework. The results of this study found that most students know how to learn and use social media literacy as four levels; access, analyze, evaluate and create. But some students do not know about how to use social media as a benefit for classroom learning. They lacked awareness of the benefits and downsides of social media, parents should tell them how to learn and how to perceive the good things from social media.

Keywords: Online, Communication, Awareness, Perception

I INTRODUCTION

Today, social media has emerged as a popular medium for providing new sources of information and rapid communications, particularly during natural disasters (Yin, Lampert, Cameron, Robinson, & Power, 2012). According to Dabbagh and Kitsantas (2012) is the interaction among people in a virtual environment that facilitates the creation, sharing and exchange of content with other users. Kaplan and Haenlein (2010) noted social media can be defined as Internet applications based on Web 2.0 that allows for people to collaborate and share information online. According to Cohen (2015) social media is a dominant force in the modern world that can change minds, catch more business, increase sales or build and shape a brand or business. Social media has an impact on every platform. The ten most popular social media sites are Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, LinkedIn, Pinterest, Google+, Tumblr, Instagram, Reddit and vk (eBizMBA, 2016). Facebook is the biggest social networking site with the largest number of users. There are currently more than 1 million small or medium sized businesses advertising on

Facebook. The American Academy of Pediatrics (2016) reports 22% of teenagers log on to their favorite social media site more than ten times a day, and more than half of adolescents log on to a social media site more than once a day. Seventy-five percent of teenagers now own cell phones and 25% use them for social media, 54% use them for texting, and 24% use them for instant messaging.

Whilst social media can be great fun and an inclusive way of connecting with other users there is a downside. Besides the benefits, there are also risks. The problems that occur with the youth are cyber bullying, privacy issues, sexting, excessive use and sleep deprivation. Whilst some parents use technology incredibly well and feel comfortable and capable with the programs and online venues that their children and adolescents are using, many are baffled by the online world and worry what their children are getting up to. Some parents may find it difficult to relate to their digitally savvy youngsters online for several reasons. Sometimes parents lack a basic understanding that kids' online lives are an extension of their offline lives. In the end the knowledge and technical skill gap between parents and youth creates a disconnection in how they participate in the online world together.

According to Lim and Yin (2011) the younger generation use social media in its various forms much easier and assimilate information at a faster rate than the older generation, but the question is do they possess appropriate literacy skills to benefit from the social media environments such as use social media to share knowledge between teachers and students. There is a growing use of social media in the educational setting and it has many benefits for learning. Teachers can create learning content and post it for students, encourage debate and answer questions. According to Almu and Buhari (2014), mobile phones increase the active participation for young people in secondary school students in their social life even during school hours. Almost all students used social media such as Facebook, YouTube, Line, etc. However, the issue for today is not about the benefits of social media but if it affects students' studies negatively or positively thereby decreasing or increasing their performance academically. Sometimes, students are not aware of,

or able to process, the information coming at them. Therefore, this study examines the perception and awareness of the young students in secondary school. The research objectives of this study are:

A. Research Objectives

The purpose of this study are to assess the social media literacy and level of awareness in using social media by young people in secondary school.

B. Research Hypotheses

The paper provides the two hypotheses as follows:

H₁ The impact of gender differences among respondents on the relationship between knowledge and awareness of social media literacy.

H₂ The impact of age differences among respondents on the relationship between knowledge and awareness of social media literacy.

II LITERATURE REVIEW

A. Social media

According to Wikipedia (2012), social media is the interaction among people in a virtual environment that facilitates the creation, sharing, and exchange of information and ideas (Odhiambo, 2012). Social media is a phenomenon that has drawn a lot of attention both to companies and individuals interacting on the networking landscape. Kaplan and Heinlein (2010) defines social media as internet applications based on Web 2.0 that enables users to create content and collaborate and share information online. Social media have several advantages and possibilities allowing ideas to spread faster than when content emerges from one source.

Odhiambo (2012) states that social media is a phenomenon that has become an important aspect in the marketing mix and is revolutionizing the way companies interact with customers. In addition, Sheedy (2011) says social media are Internet-based applications that build on the ideological and technological foundations of Web 2.0, which allows the creation and exchange of user-generated content. Consequently, this study would like to investigate the level of awareness of using social media.

B. Media Literacy

According to Thoman and Jolls (2005) media literacy is a framework to build an understanding of the role of a media society. There are five levels of the media literacy process, skills access, analyze, evaluate and create. While Peter (2009) reports that media literacy is the ability to access, analyze, evaluate and create messages across a variety of contexts.

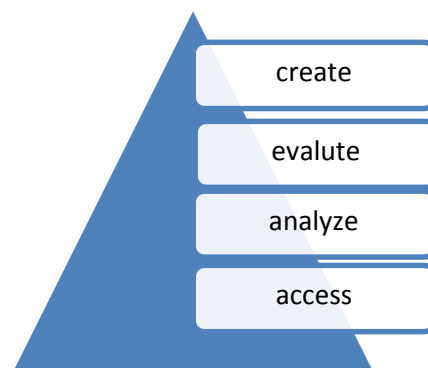


Figure 1 Media literacy framework

C. Social media awareness

According to Wikipedia (2009) awareness is the ability to directly know and perceive to feel or to be conscious of events, objects, thoughts, emotions, or sensory patterns. Therefore, this study would like to examine the social media awareness of young people in secondary schools.

III RESEARCH METHOD

This study employed mixed-method research using quantitative and qualitative research to collect data from four world-class standard schools in Nakhon Si Thammarat Rajabhat. The questionnaire was verified by three experts. One expert was from the Psychology program from Walailak University and two other experts came from the computer education program and innovation development program of Nakhon Si Thammarat Rajabhat University. The instrument was designed based on a social media literacy model as above; access, analyze, evaluate and create. In addition, this study includes understanding of social media. The Cronbach alpha was .723.

C. Sample Size and Sampling Techniques

This study used a purposive method to collect data from four world-class standard schools in Nakhon Si Thammarat. The sample group consisted of second year students in the secondary schools in Nakhon Si Thammarat Province.

B. Procedure and Data Collection

This study used a quantitative method to collect data from four world-class standard schools. Before collecting data, four events were set and transferred to all students to evaluate their perception and awareness. There are four steps of the media literacy framework used to assess media literacy and social media awareness from young people attending secondary school. The four steps are as follows:

1. The ability to access information through social media, Facebook, Line, YouTube etc.
2. The ability to analyze information through social media, Facebook, Line, YouTube etc.
3. The ability to evaluate information through social media when the students read or see the information.
4. The ability to create new information from social media.

IV DATA ANALYSIS

A process of data analysis was used to test the data based on the research objectives. Statistical analysis was conducted to test the two parts of the data. The first part was descriptive data as mean, standard deviation and percentage. The data analysis for two hypotheses were used t-test and Pearson correlation. The second part used content analysis to analyze the data.

D. Descriptive Analysis

Descriptive analysis describes the general statistical description of variables in the study such as demography of the respondents, the means, standard deviation and percentage.

Table 1 shows the gender of the sampling group. There are 49.2% of the respondents were male and 50.8% were female.

E. Results of the study

Table 1 Gender

Gender	Frequencies	Percentage
Male	61	49.2
Female	63	50.8
	124	100

Table 2 shows the demography of age. The age between 12-13 years old are 74.2% and 25.8% the age between 14-15 years old.

Table 2 Age

Age	Frequencies	Percentage
12-13	92	74.2
14-15	32	25.8
	124	100

Table 3 presents frequencies and percentage of each school. There are 49.2 percent from Benjamarachutit Nakhon Si Thammarat School while 26.6 percent from Chian Yai school. In addition, there are 17.7 percent from Muang school and 31.5 percent from Thasalaprasitusksa.

Table 3 Schools

School	Frequencies	Percentage
Benjamarachutit school	61	49.2
Chian Yai school	33	26.6
Muang school	22	17.7
Thasalaprasitusksa school	39	31.5
Total	124	100

F. Quantitative data

This study presents quantitative data regarding the knowledge of social media from students in secondary schools as follows:

Table 4 shows the mean and standard deviation of knowledge about social media from the respondents. 92.7% know the impact of social media for daily life, while 0.8% not agree and 6.5% are not sure. 81.5% know social media can communicate with people around the world, while 18.5% don't know. 87.1% know social media can be used to chat with friends, while 1.6% don't know and 11.3% are not sure. 71% of the students know Facebook is the most popular social media site and 56.5% can use Line to chat with friends.

Table 4. Knowledge about social media

List	No (%)	N/A (%)	Yes (%)
1. Social media impacts on your daily life.	0.8	6.5	92.7
2. Social media can communicate with people around the world	18.5	0	81.5
3. Social media can be used to chat with friends	1.6	11.3	87.1
4. Facebook is the most popular social media	0.8	28.2	71
5. Line is used to chat with friends.	4.8	38.7	56.5

Table 5 shows the level of awareness and social media literacy from second year students in secondary schools. There are 66.9% of students not agreeing when seeing advertising about free programs, while 24.2% are not sure and 8.9% agree. 69.4% of students thought that pills on ads on Facebook are not true. 28.2% are not sure and 8.9% of the students thought it true.

Table 5.the level of awareness and social media literacy

List	Disagree (%)	Not sure (%)	Argee (%)
1. When you see information on websites that are advertising the giveaway of free programs students should click through this website.	66.9	24.2	8.9
2. When students see an advert for pills on posting ads on Facebook students think that it is really possible.	69.4	28.2	2.4
3.If your friends are online We should give the address and telephone number	59.7	34.7	5.6
4. When you receive a message from an unknown person you should not read it immediately, because it may not be safe for the student's computer	14.5	21.8	41.9
5. You are currently in the chat room someone harasses you or is abusive. You should tell your parents	11.3	21.8	66.9
6. If someone would like to be your friend and asks for your photo, you should send it to him to know him better.	43.5	43.5	12.9
7. The users of social media should have knowledge of etiquette and creative use.	4.0	15.3	80.6
8. When you find a person with questionable behavior or who may be potentially harmful to others you should remain silent because the potential danger to himself.	29	36.3	34.7
9. Profanity or offensive words should not be used on Facebook	38.7	22.6	38.7
10. When you feel stressed or have problems you should share by posting on Facebook	56.5	33.9	9.7

59.7% of students thought they should not give an address and telephone number to strangers. 41.9% of students said that we should not read messages from strangers and 66.9% said that they should tell their parents if someone abuses them on Facebook. 43.5% of students do not agree with sending photos to strangers. 80.6 % said they should be honest and decent interactions when using social media. 36.6% feel not sure when they encounter suspicious people whether they should keep quiet or tell their parents. 38.7% of students did not agree to swear or use offensive words on Facebook when they feel upset. Finally, 56.9% of students did not agree to post on Facebook when they feel stressed or have problems.

D. Research Hypotheses Testing

This study provides three hypotheses about testing the different between gender, age, and school.

H1: The impact of gender are differences among respondents on the relationship between knowledge of social media.

Table 6 presents the Pearson correlation between gender, age, knowledge of social media and social media literacy awareness.

Table 6 the Pearson Correlation

		Gender	Age	knowledge	awareness
Gender	Pearson Correlation	1	.195*	.295**	-.148
	Sig. (2-tailed)			.001	.087
	N	135	135	135	135
Age	Pearson Correlation	-.195*	1	.058	.185*
	Sig. (2-tailed)			.507	.031
	N	135	135	135	135

*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Table 7 presents the difference knowledge of social media among male and female. The table presents the male (Mean = 5.246, SD. = .810) and female (Mean = 5.657, Sd. = .507). The results shows t -value (3.56) and P-value equal .001. Therefore, the knowledge of social media between male and female and significant at the level of p-value equal .001. The result shows females tend to have more knowledge of social media compared to males.

H2: The impact of age differences among respondents on the relationship between social media literacy awareness.

Table 7. There are difference among respondents on the relationship between knowledge of social media.

	Mean	S.D.	t	P-value
male	5.246	.810	3.56	.001
female	5.657	.507		

Table 8 presents the difference among respondents on the relationships between social media literacy awareness. The table presents the male (Mean = 3.24, SD. = 1.02) and female (Mean = 3.72, SD. = 1.25). The results shows t-value (2.176) and P-value equal .031. Therefore, the social media literacy awareness between ages are different and significant at the level of p-value equal .05 with higher age category having more awareness of social media literacy.

Table 8. The impact of age differences among respondents on the relationship between social media literacy awareness.

	Mean	S.D.	t	P-value
12-13	3.24	1.02	2.176	.031
14-15	3.72	1.25		

E. Qualitative data

This study used four activities regarding accessing, analyzing, evaluating and creating the information that students gained from social media. Figure 1 shows the activities from the four schools in this paper.



Figure 1. Social media activities in four world-class standard schools in Nakhon Si Thammarat Province.

Figure 1 shows the social media activities from students in our survey. After, the social media activities finished, the students discussed social media literacy. They thought social media is good for knowledge transfer and learning management. Most students know about advantages and disadvantages that come from using social media. They know how to externalize their Facebook page. Therefore, most students feel aware of using social media and can complete all levels of media literacy. However, some students did not know about this, thus, it is an issue incumbent on teachers and parents to provide good advice and guidance in how to use social media responsibly.

V DISCUSSION

Nowadays, social media impacts on everyone and every place such as in companies, business, government and education, whether individuals actively engage in social media or not. Amongst secondary school students this is palpable; using

social media is a hugely popular activity. Teenagers are highly motivated to keep up with trends in social media and ensure they fit in with their peers. According to this study, most students are very aware and know how to use social media but there are some who lack skills and knowledge, particularly to be safe online. Therefore, parents and teachers can provide good advice and guidance in how to use social media.

This study is in agreement with the American Academy of Pediatrics (2016) report about the impact of social media on children, adolescents and families. It is important that parents become aware of the nature of social media sites, given that not all of them are healthy environments for children and adolescents. However, the problem between children and parents is often because the parents lack a basic understanding that kids' online lives are an extension of their offline lives. Therefore, the important thing to consider is the knowledge and technical skill gap between parents and youth which creates a disconnect in how these parents and youth can participate in the online world together. Thus, Farah and Yanda (2015) suggest that the solution to solve these problems should be from the parents and educators such as parents should learn more about how to use social media and join their children's social networks and friends them. Then, parents will know the substance of what their children are saying and doing on these sites and can confront them about inappropriate behavior. Parents and educators should have an in prompt access to their children's mobile phones and laptops so as to know those they are chatting with the content. Parents and educator should remind their children not to post photos or content of nudity that could help strangers find them in the real world. Parents and educators should always monitor what media their children are using and accessing including any web sites that they visit and social networking site they may be using and parent should try to know the contents their children are consuming on social networking site. They should spare adequate time to watch the YouTube videos, look at their friends 'Facebook and play the games they play. Discussion content viewed online with them, does it agree with the known norm manners and values?

VI CONCLUSION

This study emphasizes the social media literacy and awareness of the youth in four world-class standard

schools in Nakhon Si Thammarat province. Most students know how to learn and use social media literacy as four levels; access, analyze, evaluate and create. But some students do not know about how to use social media as a benefit for classroom learning. They lack awareness of the benefits and downsides of social media. If parents and educators fail to grasp the concepts of social media, underestimate the importance of this phenomena to young people or even dismiss it altogether as trivial entertainment for immature 'kids' it will be a wedge in building understanding of the lives of young people in today's world.

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